



## **Transit Advisory Board**

March 11, 2021

4:00 pm to 5:30 pm

Virtual Meeting (Online) Via ZOOM

Meeting ID: 951 9599 4151

Phone#: 1 669 900 6833 or 1 253 215 8782

### **Members Present**

Christopher Ramirez, Chair (ZOOM); Kathy Foster, Vice Chair (ZOOM); Harris Balkin (ZOOM); Rachel Hertzman (ZOOM); Don McIver (ZOOM); Jennifer Jackson (ZOOM); Brendan Miller (ZOOM); Steve Pilon (ZOOM); Orville Pratt (ABSENT), Patricia Salisbury (ZOOM); Hodgin Serrullo (ZOOM); Jacqueline Smith, PTAB (ABSENT)

### **Staff Members Present**

Danny Holcomb, Director (ZOOM); Andre De Garmo, Principal Planner (ZOOM); Margaret Lucero, Executive Assistant (ZOOM)

### **Visitors Present**

Nate Begay, Valle de Oro, National Wildlife Refuge (ZOOM); Adam Leuschel, Assistant City Attorney (ZOOM); Karen Navarro (ZOOM); Terra Reed, Department of Municipal Development Division, Vision Zero Coordinator (ZOOM); Peter Rice, Downtown Albuquerque News (ZOOM)

### **Land Acknowledgement**

Chair Ramirez would like to start off the meeting with a land acknowledgement. The City of Albuquerque is on indigenous land and referred to as Tiwa land. That is currently represented by Sandia and Isleta pueblos. We ask for permission and blessing for us to be here and serve the community.

### **Call to Order**

Christopher Ramirez, Chair, began the meeting at 4:07 pm.

### **Approval of Agenda or Additions**

Danny Holcomb mentioned Chris Payton will not be able to present FY2022 Transit Department Budget, he had a death in the family. Chris Ramirez asked for a motion to approve the changed March 11, 2021 agenda. Patricia Salisbury moved to approve the agenda with the noted changes and Harris Balkin 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion.

The motion was voice approved by Harris Balkin, Kathy Foster, Rachel Hertzman, Don McIver, Jennifer Jackson, Brendan Miller, Steve Pilon, and Patricia Salisbury.

### **Approval of Minutes**

Brendan Miller requested a change to the February minutes, page 2 under Public Comment four to foot. Rachel Hertzman requested a change to the February minutes page 1 under Land Acknowledgement, acknowledge to acknowledgement, under Approval of Agenda or Additions Katy to Kathy and page 4 she expressed in last meeting that Transit Equity Day was important and should be every day and would like it in the notes. Chair Ramirez asked for a motion to approve the amended February 11, 2021 minutes. Rachel Hertzman made a motion to approve the minutes and Kathy Foster 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. The motion was voice approved by Harris

Balkin, Kathy Foster, Rachel Hertzman, Don McIver, Jennifer Jackson, Brendan Miller, Steve Pilon, and Patricia Salisbury.

**Public Comment** – *Reminder there is a 2 minute limit on Public Comment(s).*

Kathy Foster: I would like to acknowledge a loss. Helen Fox with Albuquerque Public Schools was the Director of Title 1 Homeless Project for more than 20 years. She was inducted in to the Hall of Fame. She was recognized nationally and internationally with her work with homeless students.

Jennifer Jackson: I'm new to the board and looking forward to working with this group.

Harris Balkin: What's going on with the TVM's? They are still not accepting credit cards.  
*\*question will be addressed in Director's report*

Hodgin Serrullo: I've been a student at UNM for almost 4 years and have been using the bus for 3 years. I'm grateful to be here.

Don McIver: I'm a full time administrator a CNM. I'm a big art fan and I have a show on KUNM.

Steve Pilon: Welcome to the new members.

Brendan Miller: Welcome to all the new members and happy to express the service has increased again.

**TAB Chairperson's Report – Christopher Ramirez, Chair**

Chris Ramirez: Transit Equity Day dear to my heart and should be each and every day. I read an article regarding the LA metro system. They are looking at a 2 year study and looking at free fare as an approach to economic justice and addressing poverty. I appreciate the work that the TAB has done to support that and the City's work to promote Transit Equity in an important way. Transit Equity is about having people, who is most impacted, be at the decision making table to help make decision about the future of transit equity. As spring approaches we'll be following up with Transit to do some volunteer work around bus stop maintenance.

**Director's Report-Danny Holcomb, Director**

Danny Holcomb began his report with ridership numbers. February's ridership was 192,614 passengers for fixed route. We increased service to 78% as the City moved to yellow. We're still practicing social distancing. We're hoping to open more routes as we move to green and turquoise. On Transit Equity Day we announced free fares for students 25 years and under and seniors 60 years and over. Veterans have been free for the last 10 months. As I mentioned earlier, Mr. Payton is not able to attend this meeting to go over the budget. There is a temporary employee working on the TVM's. I will have to get back with you regarding the credit cards.

*Ridership reports were emailed to TAB members*

Kathy Foster: Does the Emergency Operation Center (EOC) include Transit workers for the vaccines?

Danny Holcomb: Yes, it does. We had 130 drivers offered and less than half accepted. Our goal is to offer it to every single person in the department.

Steve Pilon: Is there any word about why the drivers are resisting the vaccine?

Danny Holcomb: Initially they were waiting for the Johnson & Johnson vaccine to come in. I hope they give us an opportunity to go back and re-offer those who refused it.

Chris Ramirez: Do you know what the recently signed American Rescue Plan means for ABQRide? There is 30 billion included in the American Rescue Plan specifically for Transit.

Danny Holcomb: We should get some money, but we don't know exactly how much it's going to be yet. I'd also like to make a couple announcements. Chris Payton has been promoted to our Associate Director. We will also have a new Deputy Director and a Public Information Officer starting on Monday. They will be at our next meeting.

### **Unfinished Business**

Andrew De Garmo: We have a draft RFP in review in the purchasing division and for preserving of the process well not be able to reveal it. We just want to make sure we don't get a protest on another project. Our general approach to the project is similar to the Houston model. The public input will be a very important piece to this project. We will make sure that the contractor that does this is including surveys and opportunities for people to weigh in on that.

Danny Holcomb: We're going to ask TAB to help get the word out there and reach out to your constituents, friends and neighbors to find out what the needs of the community are.

Andrew De Garmo: We're going to ask the consultants to be created on how they reach out. The hard part of transit planning is, often, we don't have the resources that everyone wants. It's important to ask questions in a way that try to get people's priorities. During this process we want to make sure we're considering equity so we're not ending up with more resources towards higher income or non-minority communities and less to areas that need it.

Patricia Salisbury: When will this process began?

Andrew De Garmo: Start process should start this fall after it's gone through the different processes of purchasing approval, reviewing community responses and City Council approval.

Rachel Hertzman: What do you expect from the board members in terms of outreach? My suggestion is to send my employer's transportation department for review or collaboration. I would like the opportunity to give my feedback.

Chris Ramirez: This has been a four year process and there was an understanding that board members wanted input in the process and it sounds like that's not legally possible. Can we get clarification?

Adam Leuschel: For the purposes of IPRA (Inspection of Public Records Act), we can't share the RFP while it is in the development stage. Those documents will be vulnerable to IPRA and that would possibly give companies either a head start or an unfair advantage.

Chris Ramirez: That was never explained to us in the four years we have been asking for input in the process.

Steve Pilon: It's great to hear we have a draft RFP. It seems we're making headway and have a timeline. I hope the RFP will incorporate suggestions from Terra at Vision Zero. I support using Houston as a model.

Harris Balkin: Please add Richmond to the thought process, they have a similar BRT and same kind of ridership statistics. I'm back in a Hotel Director Sales position and I would be happy to get any information out there.

Jenny Jackson: Is there a way to share general ideas or content from RFP without violating any rules?

Chris Ramirez: Andrew, there is no opportunity for public comment because it's submitted to purchasing as a final draft, is that correct?

Andrew De Garmo: I'm taking notes as you are telling me your comments and questions.

Kathy Foster: I think it's so important to go to the people who are riding and hope it can be included in the proposal and not just said. Once you have that scoped out, can you share that with us, not to critique, but to see how we can be of assistance.

Danny Holcomb: What Andrew presented is a very narrow portion of what we're doing. We can't tell you the specifics, but a lot of what TAB has discussed is in there.

Brendan Miller: If the process begins in the fall, will services change?

Andrew De Garmo: When we have a consultant start the process it will be a one and half to two years depending on the changes.

Steve Pilon: The transit professionals involved in the planning process need to structure the community input in a way that is useful for them to come up with a workable solution.

Chris Ramirez: Any kind of data collection from community has to be in languages other than English and I'm hoping that can be included in the contract. We have access to system data now where transit dependent household live and hope, in addition to public input, we're looking at data studies MRCOG has used. How do we hear from people who are absolutely depended on informal transit?

Andrew De Garmo: I appreciate those comments and I am taking notes. I didn't focus on the fact that we couldn't share the RFP until I was preparing for this meeting, so I apologize if I ever misled anyone.

Adam Leuschel: We can see if there is a possible way to facilitate giving direct input without you viewing the RFP.

### **New Business**

Danny Holcomb: You will start seeing work on San Pedro station by the summer.

Kathy Foster: Chris and I are working with TAB members and Transit Department in identifying Stakeholders which might help us organize what we'd like to do as a board to form a Mission Statement. We will follow up with emails to hear from the stakeholders that you'd like identified in this process.

*There is not a Transit employee update for this part of the agenda*

Kathy Navarro: I'd like to propose a supplement to what passes the agencies are already purchasing. The shocking percentage of people who are homeless, who have zero income, are totally reliant on bus passes given out by organizations to get to appointments, job interviews, etc. Organizations that serve homeless adults be provided with ABQRide free ride stickers, similar to those given to students, these stickers would be picked up or mailed to a contact person at each eligible organization. Logistics of a new free ride policy would be worked out by a planning group consisting of ABQRide staff members and up to 5 community members who work or

volunteer with homeless individuals. I will send out a preliminary proposal to Chris and ask him to send it out to everyone.

Chris Ramirez: Thank you Karen we'll share that information with the board and we'll bring you back in April.

Don McIver: If pass is lost, is there a way of tracking it so they can get it replaced?

Rachel Hertzman: It's a great idea. Do you have any contacts with Hope Village or those planning organizations? There's got to be some ground rules so the bus drivers are not threatened or don't have to deal with challenges that are not part of their jobs.

Hodgin Serrullo: There are a substantial amount of students that will rather use the bus than their own vehicles, but with the amount of homeless people on the buses, they do not feel safe. We need to find a balance to have ground rules that will work.

Kathy Navarro: That would be a reason to have a pilot project to get some feedback.

Steve Pilon: You might want to reach out to Jenny Metzler and get her looped into the conversation. Increasing security on the Central line might be a way to address the nuisance of the homeless people. Linking a bus pass to their ID might help with the misplaced or lost bus passes.

Chris Ramirez: If we have better resources for people experiencing homelessness in our community there will be less of a need to be on the bus. We can also follow up with Transit to know the current rules and policy guidelines around that.

**Second Round of Public Comment** *(Reminder there is a 2 minute limit on Public Comment(s)).*

Chris Ramirez: Thank you Orville for your 14 years of service on the Transit Advisory Board. Welcome to our new members and thank you to the Transit staff. I'm excited to see participation in our meetings.

**Adjournment**

Chair Ramirez, chair asked for a motion to adjourn, Kathy Foster motioned to adjourn meeting. Don McIver 2<sup>nd</sup> the motion. Meeting adjourned at 5:33 pm

**Next Meeting: Thursday, April 8, 2021; 4:00 PM via online (ZOOM)**

**Below are the chat messages exchanged during the ZOOM Meeting**

16:23:25 From Margaret Lucero to Christopher Ramirez(Privately) : An iPhone has connected, can you ask so I can rename? thank you

16:25:16 From Patricia salisbury : jenny welcome to the board!

16:28:01 From Kathy Foster : Welcome, everyone!

16:34:27 From Patricia salisbury : So glad 36 is running again!

16:42:44 From Danny Holcomb : me too!

16:48:21 From Patricia salisbury : When will this process begin (community input)?

16:48:31 From Christopher Ramirez : Thanks Patricia

16:48:36 From Christopher Ramirez : Others can also add questions

16:48:51 From Terra Reed | DMD | she/her : Andrew, the Community Planning Area assessments might be a good outreach tool and please let me know if I can help from the Vision Zero side, as more transit use is a goal of Vision Zero!

16:51:57 From Christopher Ramirez : Thanks Steve I see your hand

16:55:11 From Terra Reed | DMD | she/her : Comprehensive Plan!  
16:55:11 From Jenny Jackson : Is there a way to share broad ideas in the RFP without sharing the draft itself? Perhaps TAB could provide some general input without violating any rules.  
16:55:25 From Rachel Hertzman : Thanks, Christopher, I agree, that is a well-spoken point.  
16:56:10 From Patricia salisbury : Ditto to Rachel's comment!  
16:56:10 From Jenny Jackson : The federal government frequently puts out requests for comment before drafting RFPs-- thinking there could be a similar process here.  
16:57:21 From Adam Leuschel he/him : Jenny, that is a possibility. Transit and I can discuss internally the best way to accomplish this.  
17:10:10 From Andrew de Garmo : My email is adegarmo@cabq.gov. Please send me any thoughts or comments!  
17:10:13 From Jenny Jackson : What about listservs to reach people who don't ride the bus but could benefit? UNM, CNM, food banks, etc.  
17:10:14 From Kathy Foster : Thank you for the opportunity for discussion!  
17:11:59 From Harris Balkin : looking forward to seeing canopies at EDo  
17:13:50 From Karen Navarro : Karen Navarro email: knavarro411@yahoo.com; phone: 463-0872. I will welcome input on my draft proposal.  
17:14:38 From Christopher Ramirez : Giving you ten minutes for your presentation Karen.  
17:28:08 From Christopher Ramirez to Margaret Lucero(Privately) : We might go over the 90 minutes. Is that a problem?  
17:28:27 From Margaret Lucero to Christopher Ramirez(Privately) : no  
17:28:40 From Christopher Ramirez to Margaret Lucero(Privately) : Thanks Margaret.

DRAFT